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DIGITAL EDITION
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I HOPE YOU *UNDERSTAND*, MISS KILGORE, THIS ISN'T SOMETHING THAT *ANY* OF US *ENJOY*...
... BUT YOU'VE REALLY LEFT US *NO CHOICE*.
WE'VE BEEN VERY SENSITIVE TO YOUR *PERSONAL ISSUES*. THE DEATH OF A SPOUSE IS *TRAUMATIC*, TO SAY THE LEAST. BUT WE *ALSO* FEEL WE'VE GIVEN YOU *MORE* THAN ENOUGH TIME TO... COME TO GRIPS WITH YOUR SITUATION.
UNFORTUNATELY, THAT *HASN'T HAPPENED*. AND IT'S BEEN NEGATIVELY AFFECTING YOUR *WORK* PERFORMANCE. THAT'S WHAT'S BROUGHT US TO *THIS* POINT...
NOW, YOU HAVE UNTIL THREE O'CLOCK TODAY TO CLEAR OUT YOUR DESK...
EXIT

THERE'S A MAN WHO LEADS A LIFE OF DANGER...
JEEZUS--
--GREAT *SINGING VOICE* YOU GOT THERE, KURT.
I'LL ADMIT IT-- JOHNNY RIVERS, I'M NOT. BUT I'VE GOT A *BONE* T'PICK WITH *YOU,* LITTLE BROTHER...
...I MEAN, YOU GOT *SOME NERVE,* SPYIN' ON MY *EX* LIKE THIS...!
BRASS BALLS AN' *THEN* SOME!
FIRST OF ALL, SHE WAS *MY* EX BEFORE SHE WAS *YOURS...!*
SECOND OF ALL, *SOMEONE'S* GOTTA KEEP AN EYE ON HER... MAKE SURE SHE'S *SAFE...YOU* SURE AS HELL NEVER DID --
WATCH IT, DANNY-BOY!
BEING AMANDA'S *BODYGUARD* ISN'T YOUR GIG!
NEVER *WAS*--AND NEVER *WILL* BE!

I COULDN'T PROTECT *AUTUMN*... AND SHE PAID THE *PRICE* FOR IT.
I WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN TO AMANDA.
SO...*YOU'RE* HER KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR NOW? IS *THAT* IT?
YOU... *DANIEL KILGORE*... THE PRIEST-TURNED-SECRET AGENT?
'COURSE, ALL THAT *TRAINING* THEY PUT YOU THROUGH...THAT WAS JUST A DOG AN' PONY SHOW TO TRY AND MAKE SURE YOU DIDN'T FEEL LIKE A WORTHLESS *ASSHOLE*.
BUT YOU KNOW THE *TRUTH*, DON'T YOU..?
YOU CAN'T DO *SHIT* WITHOUT *ME*.

HMMM...
...Y'KNOW, I THINK I'VE FINALLY FIGURED YOU *OUT*, KURT.
I MEAN, WHY YOU'VE BEEN ACTING LIKE SUCH A COMPLETE *NUT JOB* LATELY...
YOU *HAVE*, HUH?

ABSOLUTELY.
BEING *DEAD* IS DRIVING YOU *INSANE*.

WHAT THE HELL DO *YOU* KNOW ABOUT IT--
FWOOM
TOUCHED A NERVE, DIDN'T I?
JUST *PISS OFF*, WILLYA?!
OH, DANNY-BOY.
YOU'RE GONNA FIND OUT *SOON ENOUGH*. IT AIN'T ME...
...IT'S THE *WORLD* THAT'S GONE INSANE.
NOT LISTENING ANYMORE.
WHY DON'T YOU GO...DO WHATEVER IT IS YOU *DO* WHEN YOU'RE NOT HANGING AROUND *ME*...?!
YEAH, RIGHT...
...NICE TOUGH-GUY MOVE WITH THE *CIGARETTE FLICK*, BY THE WAY! EASTWOOD WOULD BE *PROUD*!
BUT IT'S A GODDAMN *NASTY HABIT*--HOW 'BOUT I GET YOU SOME OF THAT *NICORETTE GUM*?!
MAKE SURE YOU DON'T *CHOKE* ON IT!
BROTHERS IN ARMS...
...THEY GOT NO *IDEA*.

WHADDA HELL'S HAP'NIN?!
HELP ME OUT, OZONE--!
WHERE YOU WERE BEAT
NO!
HANG ON THERE, CUZZ--!
AY YO TRIP, DON'T EVEN THINK IT, CRAB.
YOU AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE.
NOOOoooo--
HANDS ACROSS AMERICA
THAT'S ANOTHER ONE ON THEIR WAY...

OKAY, I'M ALL DONE HERE.
DAT'S SOME VOODOO YOU DOIN', TUBMAN.
TOUGH TO GET US SOME PAYBACK FROM SOMETHING WE CAN'T EVEN SEE. WE OWE YA' ONE NOW...
TRUST ME, HE WAS THERE. AND I AIN'T LOOKING FOR ALWAYS AND FOREVER. JUST DOING WHAT I DO.
MUTHAF#@KA!
I'LL KILL ALLA Y'ALL SLOBS UP IN HERE!

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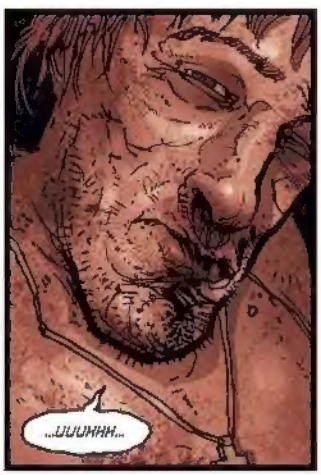
YOU GOT LUCKY LAST TIME.
THIS TIME, THOUGH?
NOT SO MUCH.
...UUunnnn...
HAVE YOU EVER MADE LOVE TO MORE THAN ONE WOMAN AT A TIME...?
THE TRICK IS... EACH WOMAN SHOULD POSSESS DIFFERENT AREAS OF EXPERTISE. THAT WAY, YOU END UP HAVING A MORE COMPLETE SEXUAL EXPERIENCE.
BELIEVE ME, IT'S THE KIND OF THING THAT KEEPS YOU YOUNG.
THAT, AND A HEALTHY DIET...
...BUT ENOUGH ABOUT ME.

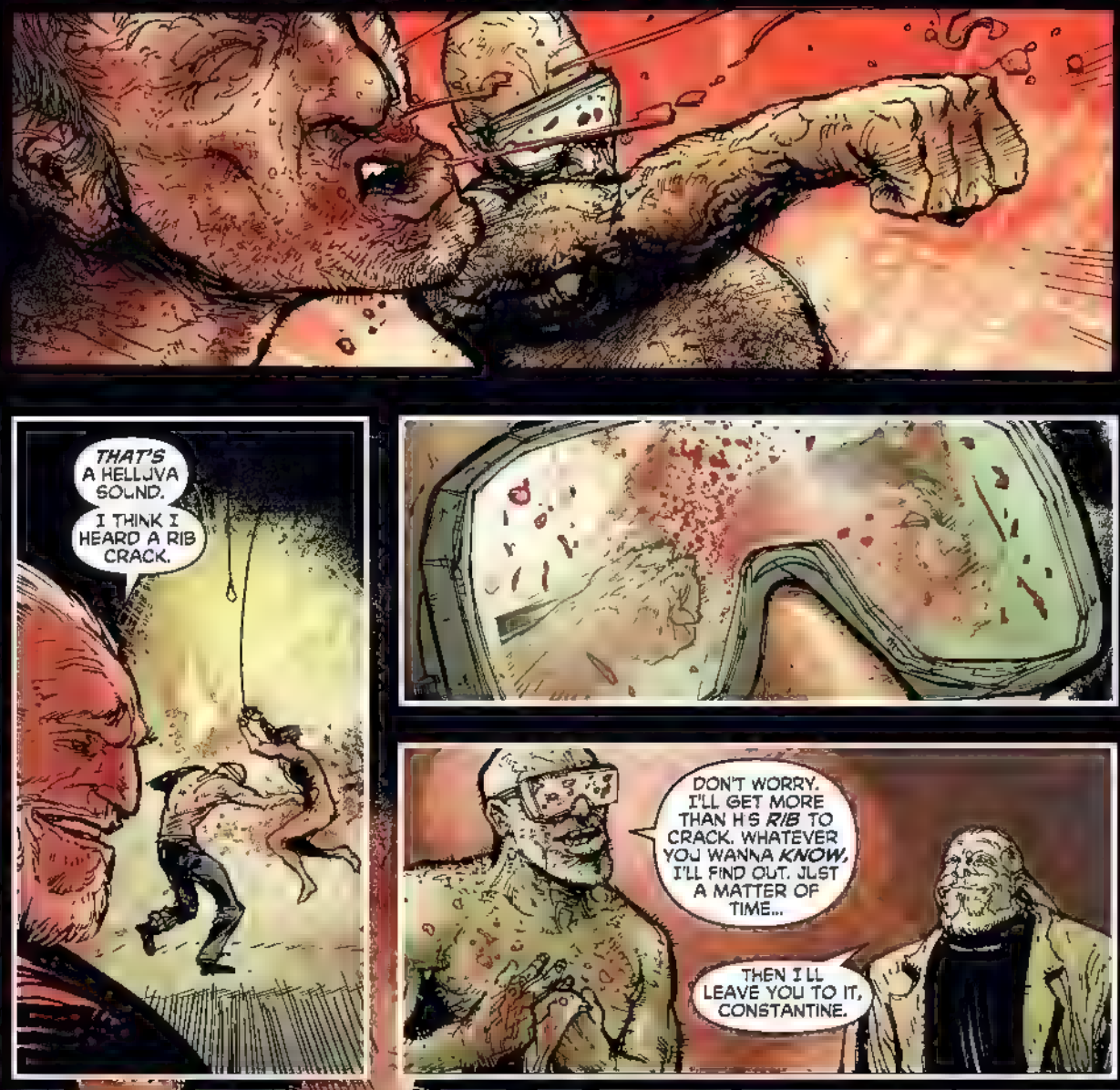
WE'RE READY TO ROCK, MISTER HURG.
GOT MY CREW ON THEIR WAY.
VERY GOOD. FEEL FREE TO FIND THE *DELICATE ART* IN YOUR PROCEDURE. AND MAKE IT *FUN*...

...THERE'S NO REASON THIS CAN'T BE FUN.


...UUUHHH...

...

COBRA TO BASE. TRACK MY BEACON AND SEND A PICK UP.
I'VE GOT SOMETHING HURG IS GOING TO BE *VERY* INTERESTED IN.


THAT'S A HELLUVA SOUND.
I THINK I HEARD A RIB CRACK.
DON'T WORRY. I'LL GET MORE THAN HIS RIB TO CRACK. WHATEVER YOU WANNA KNOW, I'LL FIND OUT. JUST A MATTER OF TIME...
THEN I'LL LEAVE YOU TO IT, CONSTANTINE.
BESIDES, I KNOW THAT SOONER OR LATER, YOU'RE GOING TO DIG INTO THAT POISON. AND I CAN'T WATCH THAT.
BUT THEY'RE YOUR ARTERIES...
...I'M SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING.

WELL, WE..L, WE..L... ALONE AT LAST.
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU *ARE*, PA...
DING
...BUT I KNOW WHAT I'M GONNA *DO* WITH YOU.
SEE, THESE ARE MY *FRIENDS*.
SPECIALISTS, ACTUALLY, IN THE FIELD OF... "PRESSURED INTERROGATION." EVEN AS A PEER, IT'S A *PLEASURE* WATCHING THESE GUYS WORK.
THE WAY I SEE IT, YOU'RE JUST A PIECE OF *RAW MEAT*. EVENTUALLY, YOU'RE GOING TO BE A FINE MEAL SERVED UP ON A SILVER PLATTER FOR MY BOSS.
BUT THAT KIND OF *GOURMET COOKING* INVOLVES SEVERAL NECESSARY *STEPS*.
FIRST UP, AS ONE DOES WHEN ONE PREPARES MEAT...
...YOU'RE GONNA NEED A LITTLE *TENDERIZING*.
KUUURRRT--!

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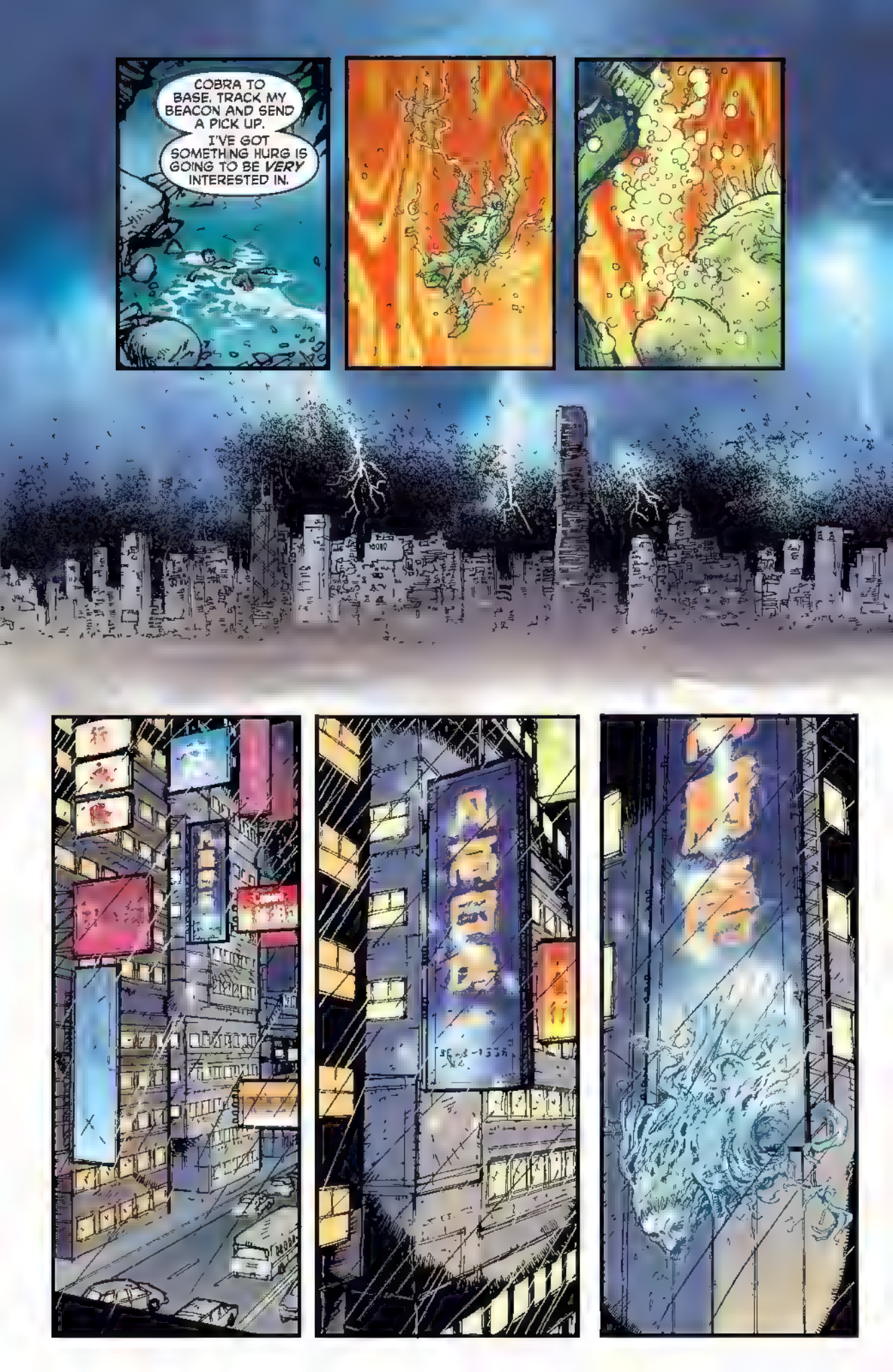
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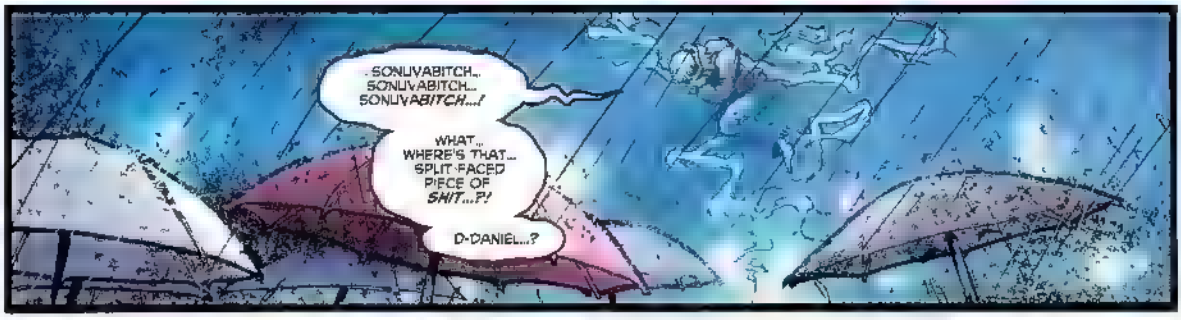

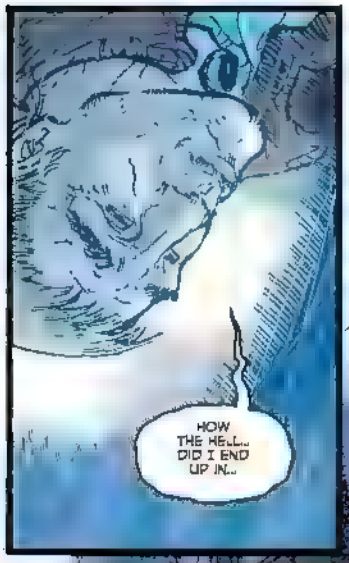

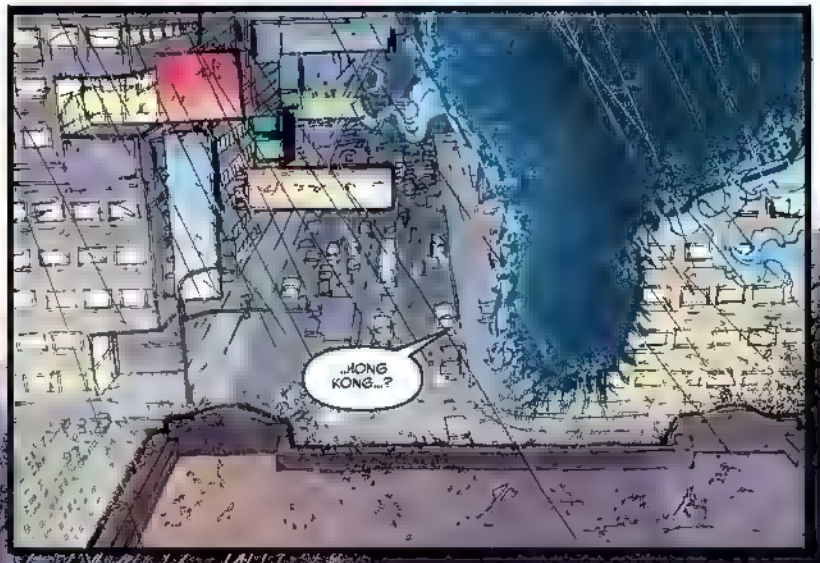

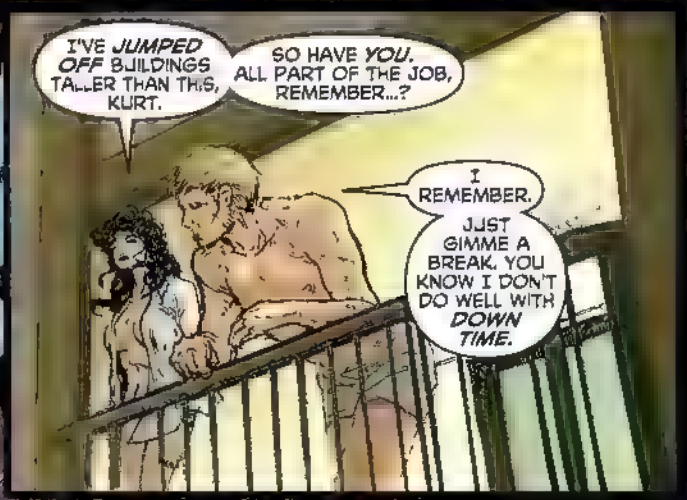
I'VE JUMPED OFF BUILDINGS TALLER THAN THIS, KURT.
SO HAVE YOU. ALL PART OF THE JOB, REMEMBER...?
I REMEMBER.
JUST GIMME A BREAK. YOU KNOW I DON'T DO WELL WITH DOWN TIME.

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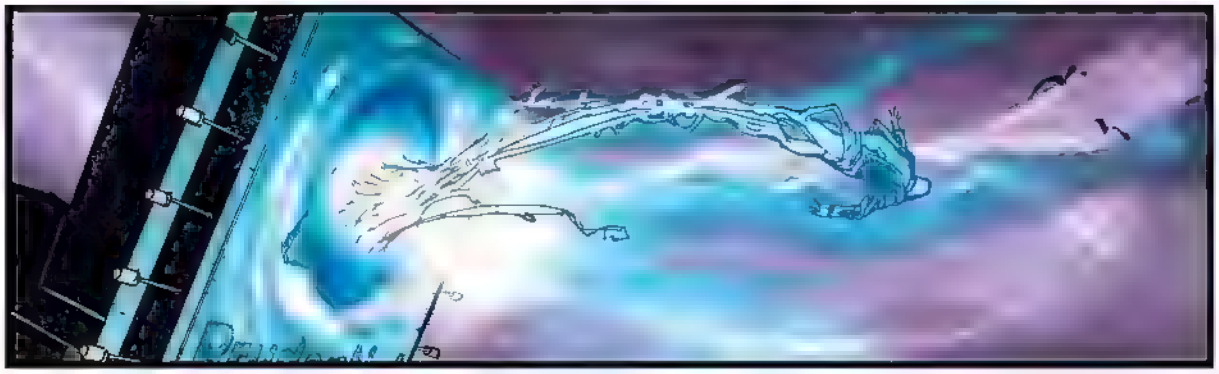
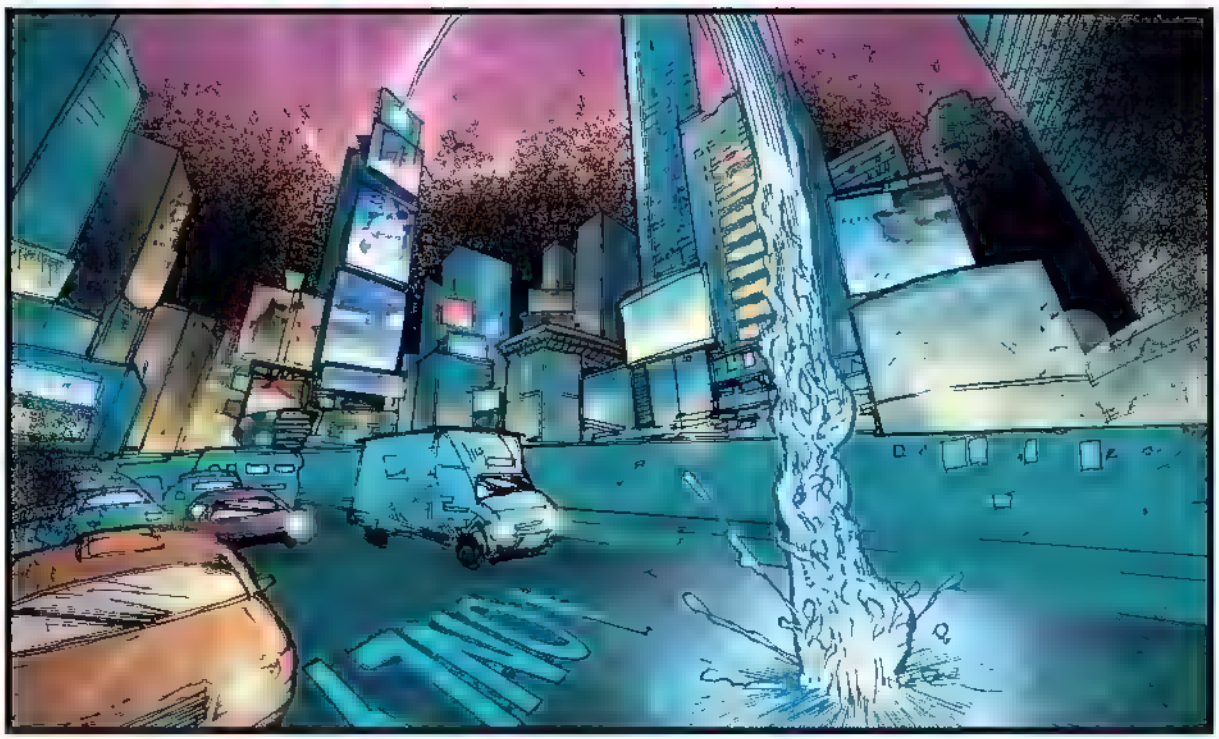
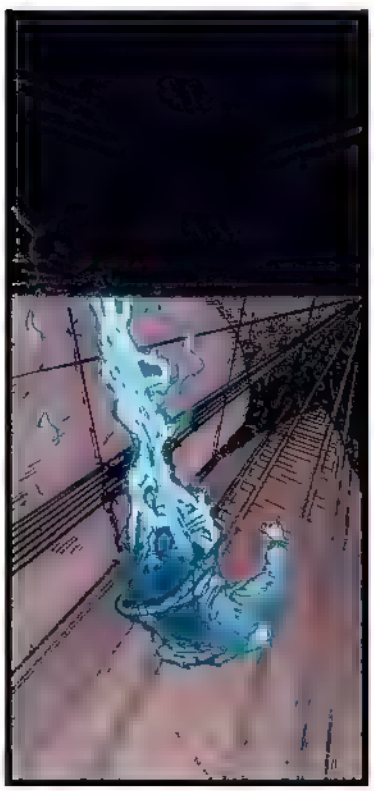
I'LL GIVE YOU A BREAK, ALRIGHT...
SAY IT.
..T'S YOU AN' ME, MIRAGE...
-- "UNTIL THE BITTER END."
SO, WHAT... THIS IS SOME KIND OF CHRISTMAS CAROL BULLSH T...?! A GHOST'S TRIP DOWN LIBIDO LANE...?!
TRYIN' TO DRIVE ME CRAZY, THEN?!
WELL, LEMME TELL YOU SOMETH NG--
-- IT'S NOT GONNA WORK ON ME!

WRAKK
WHUDD
OUCH.
:MUNCH:
THAT LOOKS PAINFUL AS HELL.
I WAS TORTURED ONCE. HELMAND PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN. SOME *TALIBAN* SCUMBAGS WORKED ME OVER *BIG TIME* WHEN I WAS ON A BLACKWATER GIG.
ALMOST KILLED ME, BUT NOT QUITE.
BIG
LEARNED A FEW THINGS, THOUGH.
:PANT:
:PANT:
:PANT:
...YOU'RE REASSESSING WHAT THE HELL YOU'VE BEEN *DOING* WITH YOUR *LIFE.*
AND I'LL JUST BET THAT RIGHT ABOUT *NOW...*

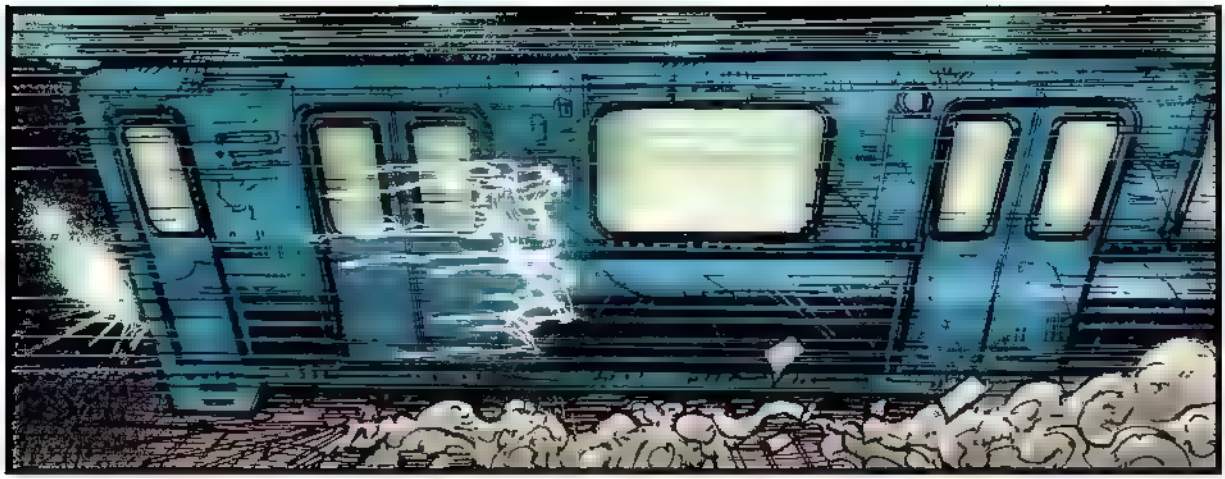


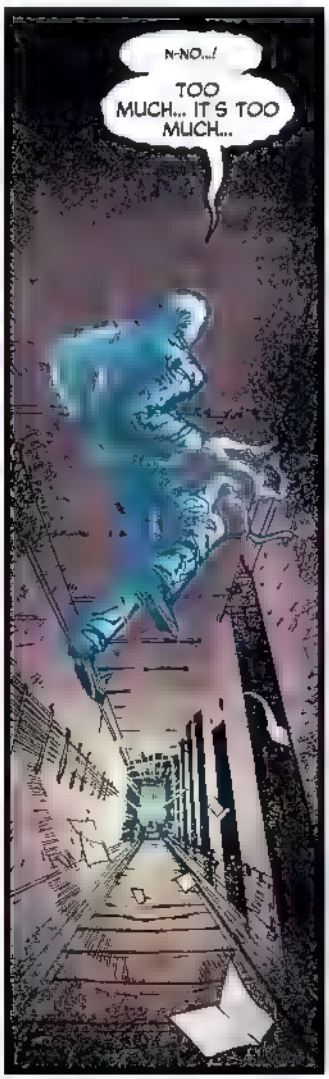




...HOW... DID I *DO* THAT...?!
CAN'T... CONCENTRATE...
HEAD'S IN A FUGGIN' *FOG* --

--GODDAMN!

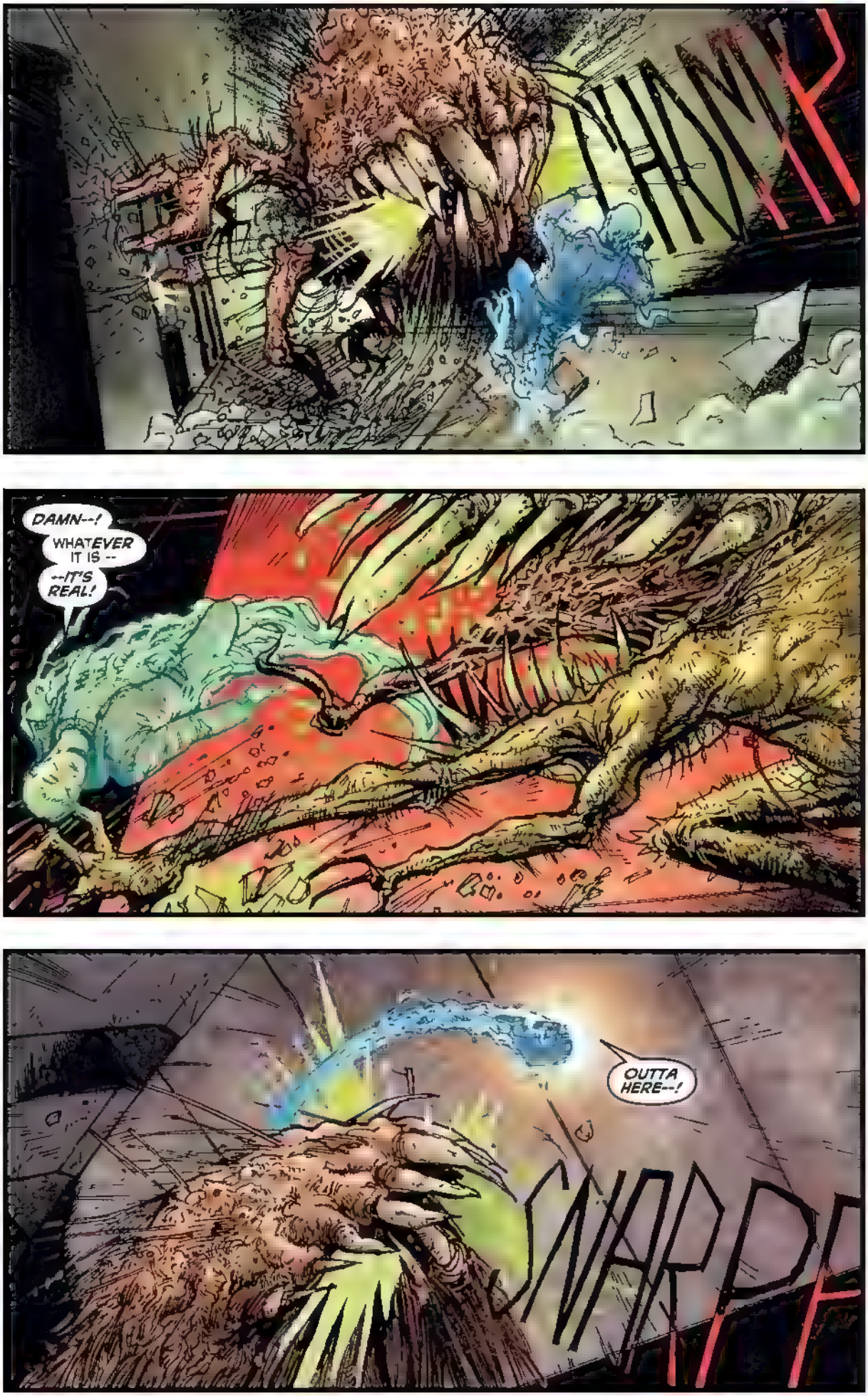


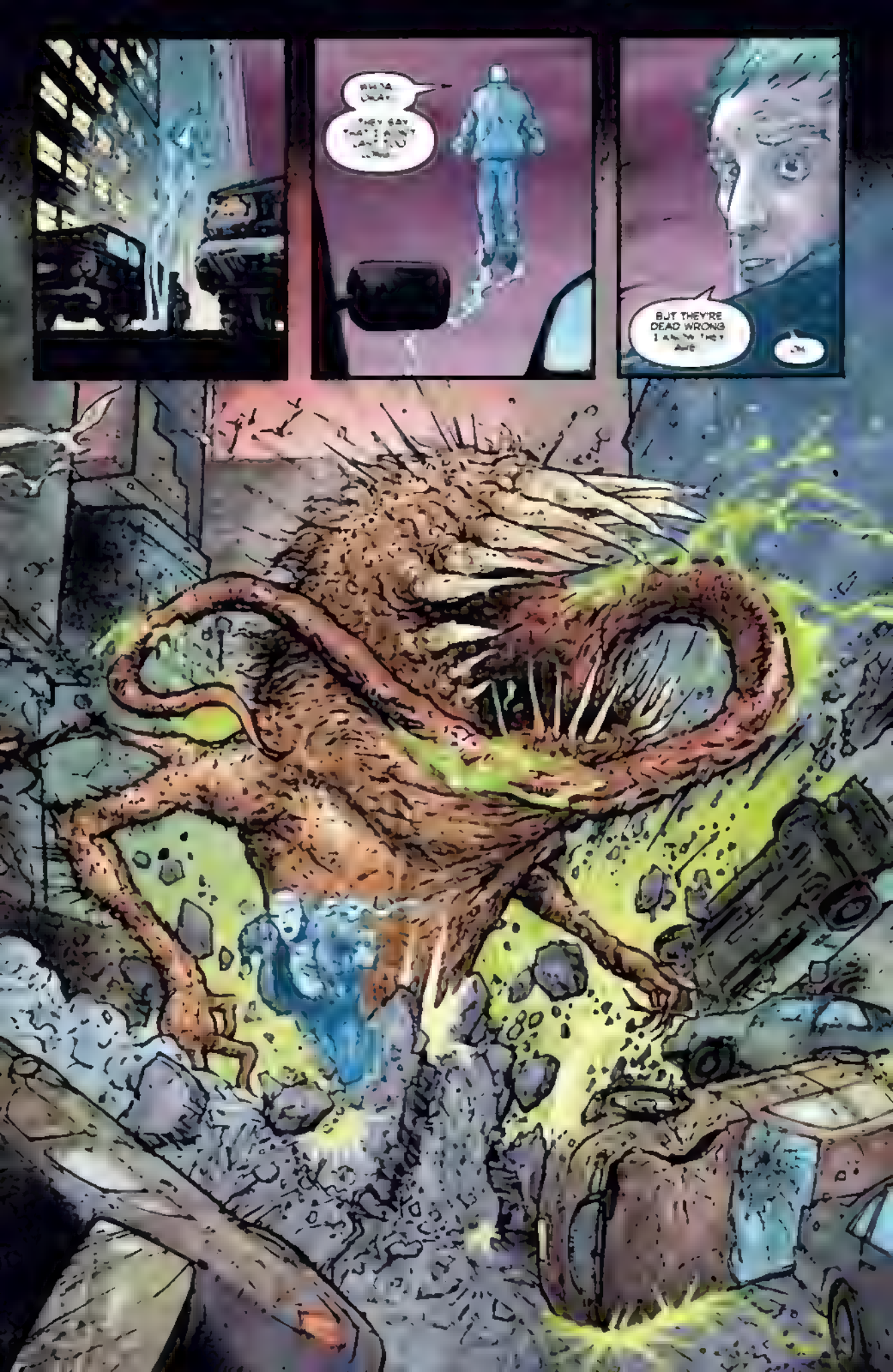

N-NO...!
TOO MUCH... IT'S TOO MUCH...

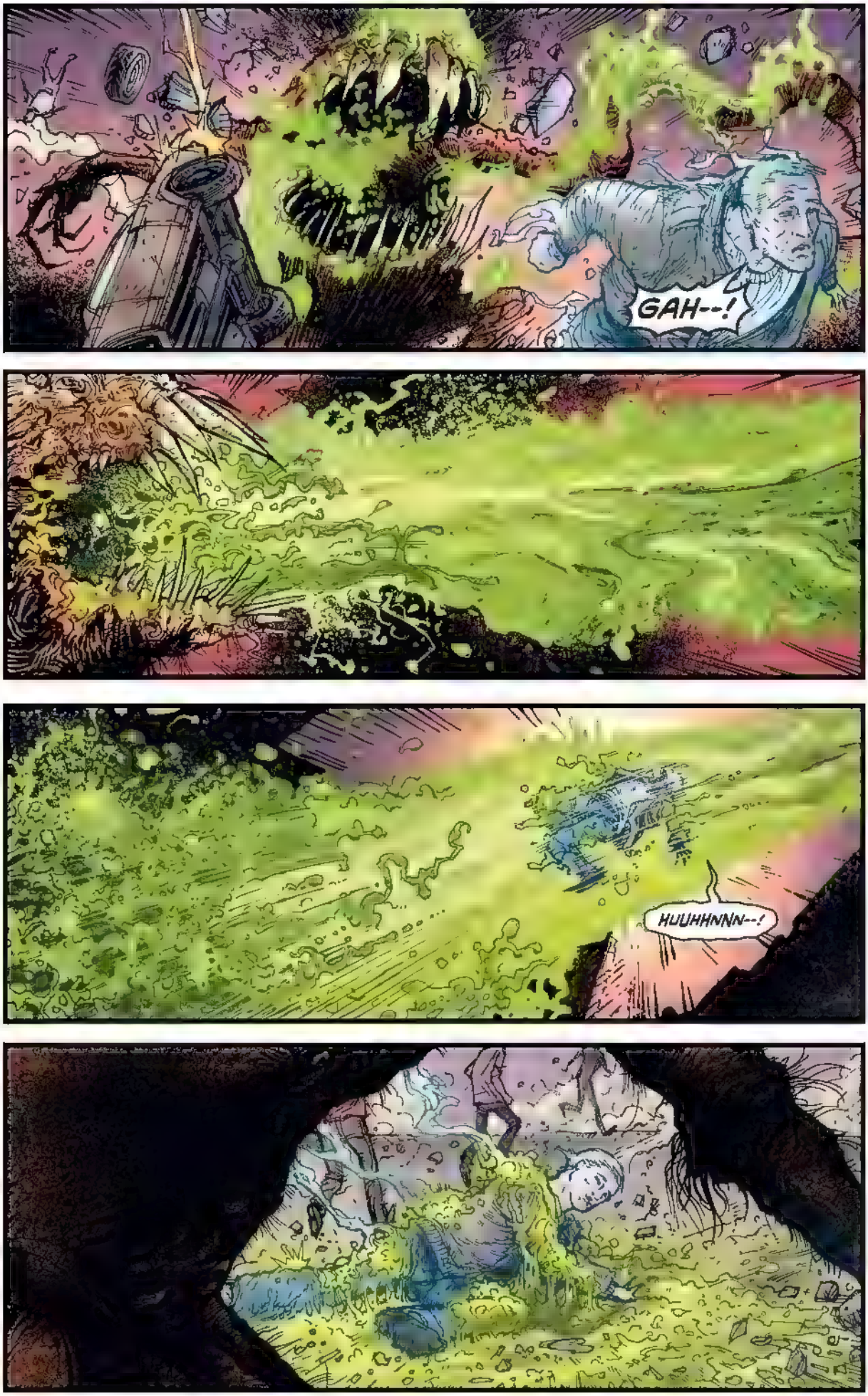
AM I... JUST GONNA END UP...
...BOUNCING AROUND THE WORLD...?
UH-UH...GET IT *TOGETHER*, KILGORE...

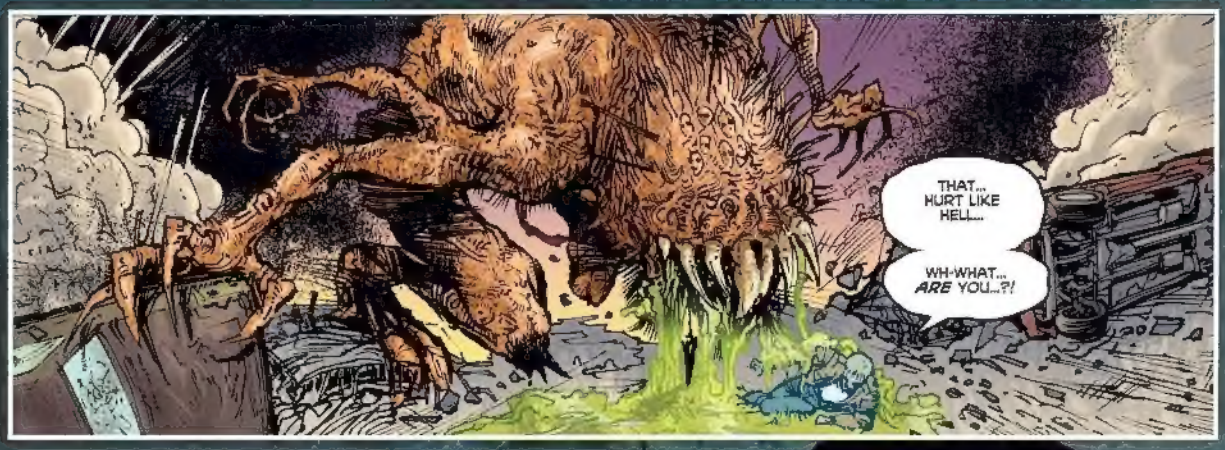
...REMEMBER... WHO YOU *ARE*...
YOU GOT... WHAT IT TAKES TO...
...TO...

HOLY SHIT--!


DAMN--!
WHATEVER IT IS --
--IT'S REAL!
OUTTA HERE--!


I'M A DEAD MAN.
THEY SAY THAT I DON'T LAUGH, CRY OR BLEED.
BUT THEY'RE DEAD WRONG.
I AM. I'M NOT DEAD.
...OH.


GAH--!
HUUHHNNN--!



--BUT AS FAR AS *YOU'RE* CONCERNED--

--IT'S THE ENEMY!

KRESH
BUT THIS 'TRIAL BY FIRE' HAS GONE ON LONG ENOUGH.
WE'D HOPED YOUR MIND WOULD'VE BEEN STRONGER. MORE DETERMINED! BUT TIME WASN'T ON OUR SIDE WHEN THEY FORCED US TO PICK YOU. SO WE COULDN'T FULLY VET YOU OUT.
YOU ARE WHAT YOU ARE. NOTHING-- NOT EVEN DEATH WILL CHANGE THAT.
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOUR LIFE! YOUR SOUL! BOTH NEEDED TESTING TO SEE HOW FAR YOU COULD BE PUSHED BEFORE INSANITY SET IN.
YOU'VE PASSED SO FAR. BUT JUST BARELY. NOW IT'S TIME TO ELEVATE YOU TO THE NEXT LEVEL IN YOUR JOURNEY.
SO FORGET ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU SEE RIGHT NOW...
IT'S ALL JUST AN ILLUSION.
THIS ISN'T REAL?
NOT AS FAR AS YOU'RE CONCERNED.

BUT IT'S TIME YOU AND YOUR BROTHER FINALLY STARTED DEALING WITH THE TRUE *REALITY* OF YOUR EXISTENCE.
SEE YOU ON 'THE OTHER SIDE'.
CLIX
TO BE CONTINUED IN THE PAGES OF
SPAWN

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ZOMBIE